

CHAPTER 4

SAFETY AND FIRE PREVENTION

SMOKE/CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

Smoke/carbon monoxide detectors are provided in all family Housing units. Family Housing residents are encouraged to test the detectors on a monthly basis. All detectors are equipped with a testing device. Consider changing the batteries on a particular, easy-to-remember day each year, such as New Year's Day, an anniversary, or semi-annual daylight savings time change. If a detector is found to be defective, notify your Service Desk immediately. Detectors are installed as a safety device to protect you and your family. Under no circumstance is a detector to be disassembled or disabled by removing the battery.

FIRE EVACUATION PLANNING

The safety of your family is of utmost importance to your Housing Office staff. We, and your local fire department, recommend each family member be involved in the planning for emergency actions to be taken if a fire occurs. This planning should include:

- ➡ A method of spreading the word of fire to all occupants of your home
- ➡ The evacuation of all family members from the residence using several different escape plans
- ➡ A predetermined meeting point away from the house
- ➡ A plan for notifying the Fire Department

This pre-planning and practicing is commonly referred to by the Fire Department as "Operation EDITH," Exit Drill In The Home, a nationally recognized fire safety program. You may contact your local fire department for brochures and further information.

REPORTING EMERGENCIES

Residents are to call **911** for fires and other emergencies. Please refer to your **Emergency Information** list for the emergency numbers appropriate for your neighborhood. Post emergency numbers, especially those different from 911, by or on each telephone in your home. Practice dialing the numbers with your children on a play phone or by holding down the receiver button while dialing on a real phone. Teach your children this number is for emergencies only.

If a fire occurs in your quarters, **before calling 911**, evacuate all occupants of your home, and notify all other occupants of your building as quickly as possible. **DO NOT CALL FROM YOUR HOME!**

Use a neighbor's phone in another building or use the nearest fire alarm box.

When phoning 911 or appropriate emergency telephone number, state the exact location of the alarm and type of fire or emergency. Give your name, address, and the telephone number from which you are calling. **DO NOT HANG UP THE TELEPHONE** until all pertinent information has been given and is acknowledged by the operator. Go outside to direct the Fire Department to the emergency scene. **NEVER REENTER A BURNING BUILDING!**

**FIRE
PREVENTION**

Historically, most house fires have begun in the kitchen area and are almost always cooking related.

**NEVER LEAVE YOUR HOUSE – EVEN FOR A FEW MINUTES WITH
SOMETHING ON THE STOVE OR IN THE OVEN.**

Kitchen

Stove burners and oven elements should always be turned off when not in use. A pan of grease or oil can ignite in as little as 4 seconds, the amount of time it takes to answer the telephone. Many fires occur when pans are left on burners to cool, and the burner is accidentally turned on. When cooking with grease, keep a lid the size of the pan nearby to place on the pan should a fire ignite. After placing the lid on the pan, carefully slide the pan off the burner to the stove surface. Keep baking soda or salt close by to apply to a fire. Most importantly, never use flour or water, or attempt to carry the burning pan outside. Many serious injuries occur to both the person caring flaming pans and others, especially children, who might be in the way.

On a monthly basis, remove and clean the fan and screen filter of your range hood. The screen filter can be placed in the dishwasher. Keeping the range hood free of grease build-up helps in preventing fires from traveling upward into the cabinet spaces and other parts of the house.

When cooking, keep pan handles pointed inward and not left hanging over the edge of the stove where they can be grabbed by small children or caught by clothing and pulled off the stove.

Electric cooking appliances (toasters, electric skillets, crock pots, waffle irons, etc.) should never be left on when you leave the house. Electric appliances should be stored unplugged. Even when not “on,” electric currents flow through the power cords when plugged in, and today’s plastic appliances can melt and catch fire.

If your stove is not working properly or appears to be overheating or arcing, place a call to your Service Desk immediately.

Living Areas

Electrical cords are never to be run under carpets or in areas where they may be damaged. Wall outlets should not be overloaded. **The use of “octopuses” (outlet plugs designed to allow multiple appliances to be plugged into a single wall outlet) is not allowed in Family Housing.** Wall outlets which are broken (including the cover), arcing, or not holding plugs securely should be called to the Service Desk.

The use of oil or gas space heaters is strictly forbidden in Family Housing, including in the garage area.

Candles should be used carefully and never left unattended. Fires occur when candles are thoughtlessly placed in areas such as bathrooms too close to towels or left lit in other rooms if the possibility exists that an occupant of the room may fall asleep.

<i>Living Areas (Continued)</i>	Matches, lighters, and other flame producing devices should be stored in areas which are not accessible to children. Children or teens playing with flame producing devices or smoking cigarettes are the second major cause of Family Housing unit fire loss and fire related injuries.
<i>Laundry room</i>	<p>Dryer vents (interior and exterior) should be cleaned regularly to prevent build up of lint which can be a fire hazard. Exterior dryer vents above the ground level and interior vents which may be too long for access may be cleaned by calling your Service Desk.</p> <p>Electrical panels should not be blocked by storage of personal articles. Electrical panels should have a legible circuit listing on the inside of the panel door. This listing identifies what each circuit provides power to. If the electrical panel in your quarters does not have such a listing, if it is not legible, or if the electrical panel appears to be malfunctioning in any way, call your Service Desk immediately.</p>
<i>Garages/Carports</i>	<p>The Fire Department recognizes that Family Housing garages/carports seldom have enough space for all the storage desired. However, if not closely watched, the garage area can become a severe fire hazard. There are specific regulations for activities and the type of storage of hazardous materials in Family Housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Storage of flammable liquid, such as gasoline, is restricted to 5 gallons. ➔ Welding is prohibited in Family Housing garage spaces. ➔ Automotive repairs and bodywork (sanding and painting) are prohibited in Family Housing. ➔ Garages are absolutely not to be used for living spaces and may not be altered or modified for such use. ➔ Do not block or barricade garage doors. ➔ Do not store items near nor block water heaters. ➔ Oil or gas space heaters are forbidden in garages.

**FIREPLACE AND
WOODSTOVE SAFETY**

Law prohibits burning of any materials other than seasoned firewood or commercially purchased fire logs in fireplaces. Do not burn household trash in your fireplace or wood stove. Piling a mass of combustibles into a fireplace and igniting it can easily cause a chimney fire. Do not store newspapers and other combustibles close to the fireplace. Use a screen or glass door. Never leave a fire unattended.

Your Housing Office will conduct annual inspections on your fireplace or wood stove and provide chimney cleaning.

If your home has a fireplace, be sure to listen to local television or radio newscasts or check your local newspaper for information of burn bans. Local burn bans are enforced in all housing areas.

CONSTRUCTION AREAS

Residents must stay away from potential danger areas such as excavations, ditches, streets, or any other area where construction or repair work is in progress. Parents must counsel their children to stay away from machinery and construction vehicles for their safety and respect for the property of others. Military members are financially and legally responsible for damages caused by their children at construction sites, materials, and equipment.

Look for and carefully read housing newsletters and special notices, which will be delivered with your mail. In many cases, these are distributed to warn you of possible hazards in your area due to construction projects or maintenance work.

**GROUND FAULT
INTERRUPTER (GFI)
RECEPTACLES**

GFI receptacles are installed in bathrooms, kitchens, and garages. Most exterior receptacles are of this type. GFI receptacles are designed to turn off power to that outlet when electrical shock danger is present. If a hair dryer or electric razor is dropped into the bathroom sink, the breaker will trip, preventing serious injury. In extremely damp conditions, or if the circuit becomes overloaded, GFI receptacles, located in many garages, will automatically turn off.

The government cannot and does not assume responsibility for food spoilage that may result if these circuits are used for personally owned refrigerators or freezers. Because these receptacles are sensitive, we recommend that you not use them for refrigerators or freezers. If you choose to do so, check frequently to be sure the power has not tripped off.

**STUDY YOUR HOME
FOR SAFETY HAZARDS**

Protect yourself and your family from unnecessary injuries. Review the following checklist:

- ➡ Store all household chemicals including detergents, cleaning products, cosmetics, medicines, pest killers, and liquid fuel out of children's reach.
- ➡ Keep firearms locked up and unloaded. Store firearms separately from ammunition. See the appendix for your base for specific information on proper storage of firearms.
- ➡ Never leave a child unattended for any period of time in a bathtub, wading pool, or any place where they could have a serious accident. A small child can drown in less than one inch of water.
- ➡ Do not use bathroom electrical appliances when you are wet or in the bath tub, or shower.
- ➡ Keep stairs, halls, and exits (inside and outside) free from clutter.
- ➡ Use care in placing scatter rugs. Make sure they have non-skid backs.
- ➡ Keep all sharp objects, electrical appliances, and power tools out of reach of children.

**WINDOW FALL
PREVENTION**

While there are many important safety measures to be taken in any home environment, falls from windows, or falls from heights where injury could occur, are of particular concern as there are so many small children in our neighborhoods. Children must be taught the dangers of playing near second story windows, as they tend to be fearless when it comes to heights and are unaware of the consequences of a fall from a high place. Please take the appropriate safety measures to avoid a falling accident in your home. The following tips are provided to assist you in creating a safe environment for your children.

- ➡ Do not put furniture, toy boxes, or beds under a window or children may climb up and fall out of the window.
- ➡ Screens are meant to keep insects out. They are not a device to hold people in. A light push on a screen could make it fall out and the child may go with it if they are up high enough and off balance.
- ➡ Take the time to research appropriate window devices that will keep children from opening upstairs windows.
- ➡ If you must have the window open make sure it is secured so it cannot open more than 4 inches.
- ➡ Consider that fire and rescue personnel will need access in an emergency.
- ➡ Never leave small children upstairs without adult supervision where they can gain access to an unsecured window.
- ➡ Inform and educate your children about avoiding a falling accident.

Your Housing Office encourages you to take time out for safety. Please make sure you take measures to avoid a tragic accident in your home.

EARTHQUAKES

Your area is susceptible to earthquakes. Don't be caught unprepared for such a disaster. Plan ahead by conducting earthquake drills with your family, just as you would fire drills, and prepare an earthquake kit that will sustain you for a few days if necessary.

- ➡ Place large or heavy objects on lower shelves throughout your home. Brace high and top-heavy objects.
- ➡ Store bottled foods, glass, china, and other breakables on low shelves or in cabinets that can be fastened shut. You may install child protection locks on your cabinets for such use, as well as for the safety of your children.
- ➡ Know where and how to shut off electricity, gas, and water in your home. If you are unsure of the locations of the shut-off valves, please call your Neighborhood Manager, or ask a maintenance representative who may be in your home for repairs.
- ➡ Gather emergency supplies and prepare for evacuation in case earthquake damage is severe. See further information in this chapter.

EARTHQUAKES*(Continued)****How to Prepare for an Earthquake***

- ➡ Review your renter's insurance policy. Some damage to your property may be covered without specific earthquake insurance.
- ➡ Protect important family documents such as wills, insurance policies, contracts, stocks and bonds, passports, immunization cards, credit card account numbers, an inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers, birth and marriage certificates in a waterproof, portable container.
- ➡ Plan how your family will stay in contact if separated by disaster. Pick two meeting places: (1) a location a safe distance from your home in case of fire, and (2) a place outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home.
- ➡ Choose an out-of-state friend or relative as a "checkpoint" for other friends and relatives to call.

What to do During an Earthquake

Most importantly – STAY CALM, and stay where you are. Most injuries during earthquakes occur when people are hit by falling objects when entering or exiting buildings.

If you are indoors, take cover under a sturdy desk, table or bench, in a doorway, such as to a bathroom or bedroom, or against an inside wall. Stay away from windows, glass outer walls or doors, or anything that could fall, such as lighting fixtures or furniture. Be aware that sprinkler systems could be activated.

If you are outdoors, stay there. Move away from buildings, street lights, power poles, and utility wires.

In a crowded public place, do not rush for a doorway – other people will have the same idea. Take cover, and move away from display shelves containing objects that could fall.

In a high-rise building, get under a sturdy desk, away from windows and outside walls. Stay in the building on the same floor, as an evacuation may not be necessary. Be aware that the electricity may go out or the sprinkler system or fire alarms could go on. Do not use elevators.

In a moving vehicle, stop as quickly as safety permits, and stay in the vehicle. Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses, or utility wires. Then, proceed cautiously, watching for road and bridge damage.

Be prepared for aftershocks. While these secondary shock waves are usually less violent than the main quake, they can be strong enough to do additional damages to already weakened structures.

If the electricity goes out, use flashlights or battery powered lanterns. Do not use candles, matches, or open flames indoors after the quake because of possible gas leaks.

Check your home for structural damage and report it as soon as possible to your Service Desk.

What to do After an Earthquake

If you smell gas or hear a hissing or blowing sound, open a window and leave the building. Shut off the main valve outside, if you can. Report the leak from a neighbor's home. If you shut off a gas valve, DO NOT turn it back on. It must first be checked by a maintenance representative.

If there is electrical damage, switch off all electrical power at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. Report the damage to the Service Desk, and do not turn the electricity back on until it has been checked by a maintenance representative.

***What to do After
an Earthquake
(Continued)***

If water pipes are damaged, turn off the water supply at the main valve. Do not turn the water supply on until it has been investigated by a maintenance representative.

Open cabinets cautiously, as objects may have shifted and could fall.

Use the telephone only to report injuries or serious damage.

Have a portable radio or television available to listen for the latest emergency information.

Stay off the streets to allow emergency crews to perform their tasks. If you must go out, watch for hazards such as fallen objects, downed electrical wires, weakened walls, bridges, roads, and sidewalks.

Stay away from damaged areas unless your assistance has been specifically requested by police, fire, or relief agencies.

***Your Family Disaster
Supply Kit***

After an earthquake or other natural disaster, you and your family may be confined to your home. A disaster could cut off basic services to your home – gas, water, electricity, and telephones – for a few days. Your family will cope best with such an emergency by preparing before disaster strikes. Once an emergency occurs, you may not be able to search for supplies. So plan ahead and be prepared.

Six basics you should stock are water, food, first aid supplies, tools and emergency supplies, and special items. Keep these items in easy-to-carry containers, such as large, covered trash cans, backpacks, or duffel bags, in easy-to-reach places, like an entry closet, utility room, or garage.

Water: Store one gallon of water per person in your family per day (two quarts for drinking, two quarts for food preparation and sanitation), and plan for at least a three day supply.

Food: Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water. If you must heat food, pack a can of sterno. Select food items that are compact and lightweight. Include a selection of the following in your Disaster Supplies Kit:

- ➡ Ready to eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables
- ➡ Canned juices, milk, and soup (if dried, store extra water)
- ➡ Staples such as salt, pepper and sugar
- ➡ High energy foods such as peanut butter, jelly crackers, granola bars, dried fruits, and trail mix
- ➡ Vitamins
- ➡ Foods for infants, elderly persons or persons on special diets
- ➡ Comfort/stress foods – cookies, hard candy, sweetened cereals, lollipops, instant coffee, and tea bags

A First Aid Kit should include:

- ➡ Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- ➡ Gauze pads in assorted sizes
- ➡ Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- ➡ Triangular bandages
- ➡ Sterile roller bandages, 2 and 3 inch sizes

***Your Family Disaster
Supply Kit
(Continued)***

- ➡ Scissors
- ➡ Tweezers
- ➡ Needles
- ➡ Moistened towelettes
- ➡ Antiseptic
- ➡ Safety pins in assorted sizes
- ➡ Cleansing agent/soap
- ➡ Latex gloves
- ➡ Sunscreen
- ➡ Aspirin or nonaspirin pain reliever
- ➡ Anti-diarrhea medication
- ➡ Antacid for upset stomach

Tools and Supplies

- ➡ Mess kits or paper cups, plates, and plastic utensils
- ➡ Battery operated radio or TV and extra batteries
- ➡ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ➡ Cash or traveler's checks, change
- ➡ Manual can opener, utility knife
- ➡ Small canister, ABC type, fire extinguisher
- ➡ Pliers
- ➡ Tape
- ➡ Matches in a waterproof container
- ➡ Aluminum foil
- ➡ Plastic storage containers
- ➡ Paper, pencil
- ➡ Needles and thread
- ➡ Shut-off wrench to turn off household gas and water
- ➡ Whistle
- ➡ Toilet paper, moistened towelettes
- ➡ Soap, liquid detergent
- ➡ Feminine supplies
- ➡ Personal hygiene items
- ➡ Plastic garbage bags with ties (for personal sanitation uses)
- ➡ Plastic bucket with tight lid
- ➡ Disinfectant
- ➡ Household chlorine bleach
- ➡ Games, books, deck of cards for entertainment

Special Items: Remember family members with special needs, such as infants and elderly or disabled persons.

For baby – formula, diapers, bottles, powdered milk, medications

For adults – prescription medications, denture needs, contact lenses and supplies, extra eye glasses

Store your kits in a convenient place known to all family members. Change your stored water supply every six months so it stays fresh. Rotate your stored foods every six months. Rethink your kit and family needs once a year. Replace batteries. Ask your pharmacist about storing prescription medications.